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THE CLOUD BIRD



MARGARET C. GETCHELL

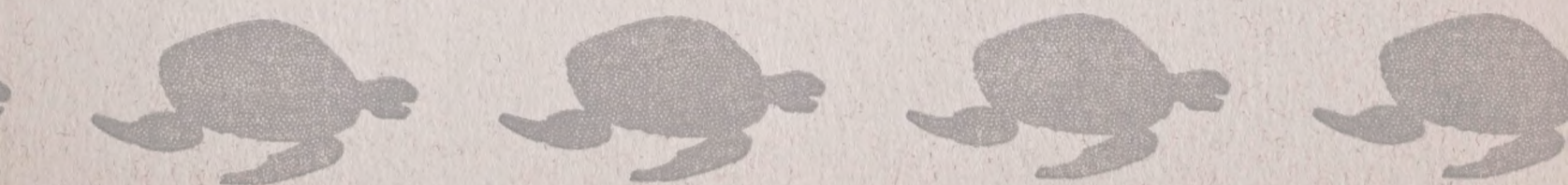
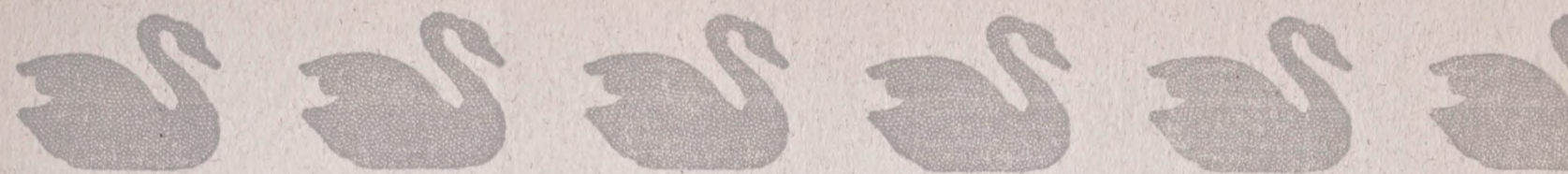


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THE CLOUD BIRD





“Out of the water he was even more beautiful than in it.”

(The Fairy Fish, page 32)

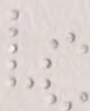
THE CLOUD BIRD

by

Mrs. Margaret C. ^{Colony} (Getchell) ["]Parsons

Illustrated by

Edith Ballinger Price



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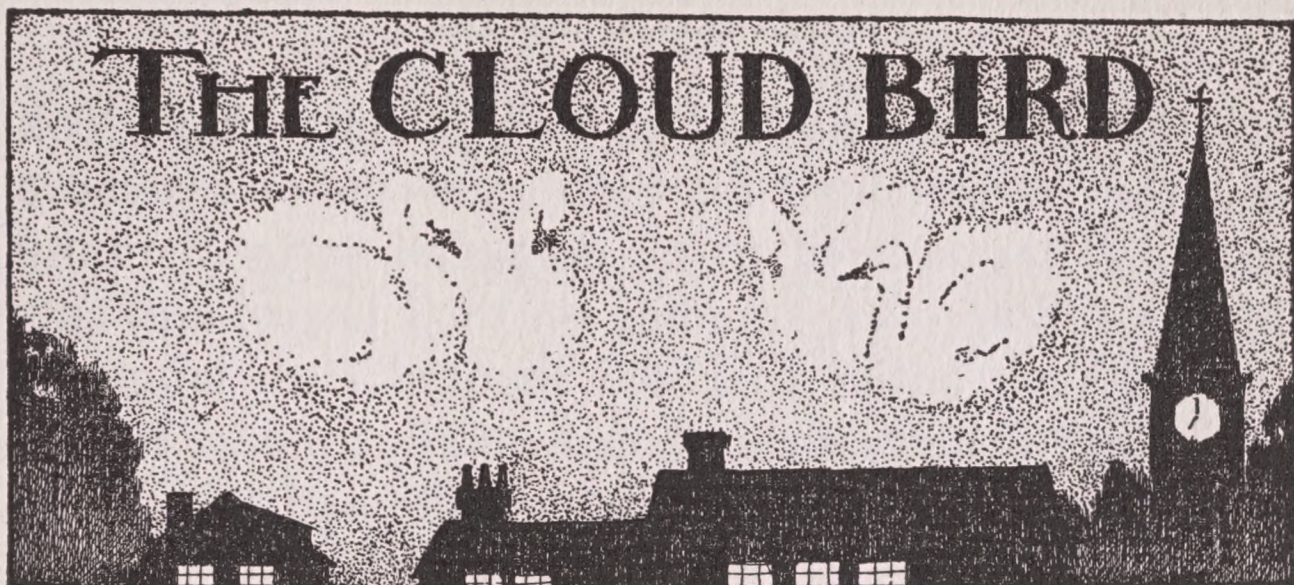
TO
MY MOTHER
WHO IS ALWAYS
MY GREATEST HELP
AND BEST CRITIC
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS LOVINGLY
DEDICATED

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DOROTHY ANN sat on the lounge by her window. It was so hot she could not go to sleep, and she decided she might just as well spend the rest of the night curled up on the window-seat watching the big, hot, tired-looking clouds languidly follow each other across the sky. Besides being so hot and tired, Dorothy Ann was a most unhappy little girl. All her small friends had gone to the sea-shore or mountains. Even Jimmie, who had expected to be in the city all summer, had been invited to visit his grandmother in Holden, and had left that day.

“Worcester is a horrid old place in the summer time, anyway,” said Dorothy Ann, looking out at the great hot sky above her. “Even the clouds are too hot and tired to hurry. But still they are on their way and will get out of Worcester some time, while I never, never shall.”

Just then she noticed that the clouds didn't look as if they were bound for the mountains or sea-shore at all. They seemed to be doing all sorts of funny things—rolling over, standing on their heads, and cutting up such antics that she shouted with laughter. Suddenly the biggest cloud of them all turned a somersault, and, as if it had heard what she had said, came tumbling down toward her window. As it grew nearer, its cottony edges dropped off and it took on a definite shape, growing all the time whiter and whiter.

"What a funny cloud!" cried Dorothy Ann. "Why, it doesn't look like a cloud at all. It's more like a bird, a big, white fluffy-puffy bird."

"That's just what I am."

Dorothy Ann almost jumped off the sofa at the sound of the voice. It was a great, soft, comfortable-feeling voice, as if it might have been made of hundreds of tiny feathers. She put her hand against the screen and felt the soft, cool white on her hot palm.



"Are you really a bird?" asked Dorothy Ann. "You look like one and you feel like one, but you are cool and white enough to be a cloud."

"You may call me a Cloud Bird, if you like."

"It must be lovely to be able to float about all night in the sky."

"Why don't you do it then, instead of staying in this hot room?"

"I couldn't, of course; I haven't any wings."

"Why, I never thought of that. It's too bad."

"Yes, isn't it? And you have such beauties."

Dorothy Ann looked enviously at his great white wings. She could see from the way he bent his long neck to look at himself that he was pleased with her admiration.



"I know what I might do," he said. "Mine are so big, I'm sure I have enough for both. You could sit on my back right between them. There is plenty of room for you, you are such a little thing."

Dorothy Ann drew herself up straight so as to look as big as possible. "I've grown a whole inch in the last five months," she said, reproachfully, for she was very sensitive about being small for her age.

"Isn't it lucky you didn't grow any more?" said the Bird; "because if you had, I might not be able to take you."

"Yes, isn't it? I never thought of that."

"I'll hold myself sidewise by the window like this and then you can step out upon my back as if I were a white fur rug in an automobile."

Dorothy Ann tried to lift the screen, but the hot, muggy weather had made it stick.

"Oh dear, oh dear, wouldn't it be dreadful if I couldn't open the window after all?" she said tragically, her mouth puckered up and her little stub nose wrinkling in her tussle with the obstinate thing.

"Let me help you." And the Bird wedged his big beak underneath the screen. Then he opened his mouth, very slowly and carefully so as not to bring too sudden a strain upon his beak, and up went the screen.

"Oh, what a useful sort of mouth to have," cried Dorothy Ann in delight, pushing the screen up the rest of the way and stepping carefully out upon the bird's back.

How good the cool feathers felt under the soles of her little bare feet! She curled herself up in the hollow between the wings, leaning against the back of his neck. It was a very long neck. As she looked up, it seemed to stretch way, way up into the sky. She wondered what kind of a bird he could be. She had never seen such a long neck before except on the Giraffe at the Philadelphia zoo, and the rest of him wasn't the least bit like a giraffe.



"Is there any place in particular you would like to go?" he asked.

"No, I don't think so. Of course, I should love to see the ocean or some mountains, but I suppose they are too far off for a one night's trip."

"Not at all, not at all," flying, as he spoke, right over Lake Quinsigamond toward Boston Harbor.



On and on they flew, tilting this way and that with the wind. It seemed to Dorothy Ann more like sailing than anything else. They cut their way through the dark sky, occasionally passing a cloud which, upon nearer view, turned out each time to be a bird. Both birds always signalled to each other with their long, graceful necks, while Dorothy Ann waved.

Soon they came to Boston Harbor and then to the ocean. Below them they could see the tossing waves and the lights of the boats. Dorothy Ann took great, deep breaths of the salt air.

"Now let us go to the mountains," said the Bird. "We are off the Maine coast and can turn in toward the White Mountains. There is one, now."

In a minute more she felt herself going up, up, then as suddenly turn and sail down. Up and down, up and down they went, over one mountain peak after another, Dorothy Ann holding on for dear life and squealing with delight. It was like coasting, except that they never had to walk up hill.

They cut through the air so fast that they made a breeze where there was none before and Dorothy Ann was quite cool and comfy, when she stepped off onto the window sill of her own room at the end of the ride.

"I've had a perfectly lovely time," she said, rubbing her face against the Bird's soft neck. "Oh, how I wish you were in Worcester in the day time!"

"So I am."

"Really? Where?" Dorothy Ann's eyes were big with astonishment.

"Why yes, I am the new Swan Boat at Elm Park. I can take you to ride any day over there, if your mother will give you a nickle."

"Why, I never knew there was such a lovely bird at Elm Park."

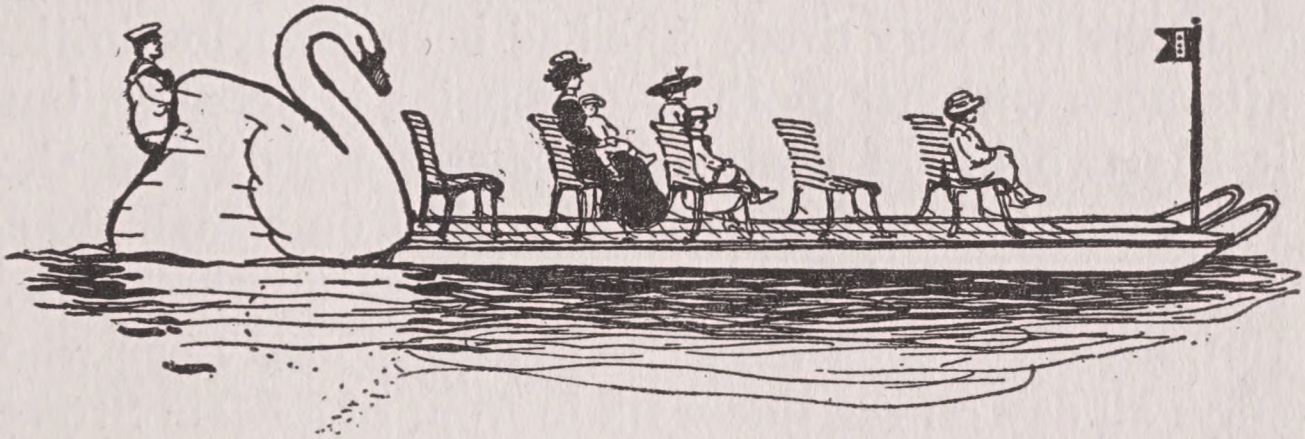


"There are no end of playthings for children in Worcester. You'll find them if you stay here this summer. Good night."

"Good night, Swan. Good night, beautiful Cloud Bird."

Needless to say, the next morning found Dorothy Ann walking down the shaded side of the street toward the park. She had on her new blue hair-ribbon and in her arm she carried her doll. She had told Snowdrop

all about the ride, and Snowdrop was very anxious to see the Swan. In her left hand she clutched tightly a large, shiny nickle—mother said she thought they wouldn't charge for Snowdrop. It was an extra large nickle—the kind that has a buffalo on it—and so shiny it seemed as though the buffalo must have been coined especially for the swan-boat ride.





The POLAR BEAR



ONE night Dorothy Ann went to bed early because she was very tired. She had been shopping in the afternoon with her mother. Shopping is tiresome, but it has two bright spots: the ice-cream soda and the Polar Bear. Dorothy Ann loves to sit on a high stool and watch the pink soda creep slowly up the straw. But she loves even better to pat the Polar Bear who stays all day on the side-walk in front of a Main Street clothing store. He is a great white fellow, and stands erect on his hind legs, with his immense claws stretched out. He is so big that he towers above the very tallest man who passes by, and he wears his fur coat even on the hottest days in summer.

Besides being tired, Dorothy Ann had a headache. But she didn't say anything about that for fear her mother would think it came from the ice-cream soda. It wasn't a big ache, but it made the cars sound very loud indeed. The noise of one would just die

away in the distance, when another would come rumbling and rattling up the hill. They came nearer and nearer until one seemed to stop right under her window. What a funny noise it made! It didn't sound a bit like a car; it was more like grumbling and growling,—the growling of a bear. Dorothy Ann jumped up and ran to the window. Sure enough, right out there on the branch of the cherry tree was a great big bear. For a minute she was scared, but then she saw it was her friend, the big white Bear, of Main Street.

“Gr-r-r-r-!” growled the Bear.

“How do you do,” said Dorothy Ann, supposing that must be what he was saying.

“Come on out and have some cherries,” he said. “Jump. I’ll catch you.”

Dorothy Ann jumped and landed right in his great furry arms.



“I haven’t had a feast like this for ever so long,” he said, settling himself in the fork of the tree and eating great mouthfuls of cherries. “Sometimes the children bring me candy and pop-corn, but my mouth is so high up I don’t get much. Peanuts are the best because they can throw those.”

“What children?”

“Why, all the children are my friends, for there is



hardly one in town who goes by without stopping to pat me."

"Have you always lived out there in the middle of the sidewalk?"

"Oh, dear no. I have only been there for twenty years. I was born in Greenland. That is a very cold country up near the north pole. The children there wear fur clothes all the time. They have never seen any pretty dresses like you buy at my store. I often think how much they would enjoy having one or two, just to dress up in."

"Wouldn't it be fun to take them some? I wish they weren't so far off."

"That won't make any difference if you really want to. We can run up and back tonight. I often do. You'd better get into some warm clothes though, for it is cold up there."

The Bear picked Dorothy Ann up and set her back on the window sill. She quickly put on her clothes but hesitated between a blue and a plaid dress. Then she remembered the plaid one came from the store in front of which the Bear stood, so she decided it was the one to wear. When she went back to the window, the Bear smiled in appreciation of her thoughtfulness.

"How many little girls are there up where we are going?" she asked anxiously. "I am afraid I haven't enough dresses to go 'round."

"Oh, I'll get the dresses," said the Bear. "You see I do so much for the man who owns the store that he is always glad to do any little thing for me. Besides attracting the children, I make everyone know the place, and often letters come addressed to 'The Store with the Bear in front of it, Worcester, Mass.'"



While he had been talking the Bear had caught Dorothy Ann again and climbed down the tree with her. Taking her little hand in his great paw, and walking on his hind legs, he led the way to the store.

Dorothy Ann thought she had never had so much fun in so short a time as she did picking out dresses for all the little Esquimaux. The Bear knew where everything was to be found because, you see, he goes inside every night at six o'clock, and wanders about the store looking at the things until his bedtime, which isn't until quarter of eight.

"I like smocks the best," he said, pushing his great paws through the sleeves of a green one embroidered in white, and waving them around like a fourth of July speaker, until Dorothy Ann shouted with laughter. "Well, everything is ready now. We will have to hurry if we want to get there tonight." As he spoke he shook the smock off his paws and wrapped up the dresses she had chosen in a big kimona,—size

44. All the pretty dresses you can imagine were in that bundle. Dorothy Ann put in the brightest colored ones she could find because the Bear said they didn't have any green trees and bright fruits and flowers up north.


Then the Bear tied the bundle on his back for a saddle, and Dorothy Ann climbed up on top of it. Off they started, the Bear trotting faster and faster, over New Hampshire and Maine, then into Labrador, till they were flying over the ground in such great leaps that Dorothy Ann had to put her arms around the Bear's neck to hold on. At last they came to the ocean.

"Oh, what a wonderful fairy boat!" cried Dorothy Ann. "Is it for us?"

"It is for us, but it isn't a boat. It's an iceberg."

And so it was. It was bigger than any boat Dorothy Ann had ever seen and it was shaped like a sail. In the center it was a beautiful deep blue, melting into paler and paler shades where it grew thinner at the edges. It floated silently and swiftly up to the shore. Without more ado the Bear and Dorothy Ann stepped aboard. There seemed to be a seat dug out for them in the ice, so the Bear sat down with Dorothy Ann in his arms. She was glad to be warmed by the shaggy fur, for she had grown very cold since she had left home.

On the way over the Bear told her all about his

life,—how he had been born in Greenland and had lived there until he was five years old. “Then I was caught and taken to New York,” he said, “where I spent a year in a little shop off Broadway amidst my cousins, the grizzly bears from the Rocky Mountains. One day I was shipped to the store, where I have been living ever since, and where I am very happy because I have so many friends, particularly among the children. I am so sorry for the bears I see going by in the circus parades, because they  are shut up in cages with chains. They look at me as though they envied me my freedom.”

Just then they spotted land in the distance, which turned out to be Greenland. As they drew nearer they saw a crowd of excited children running about. And what funny children they were, with their little round, brown faces and their straight black hair! Both boys and girls were dressed in trousers of mottled sealskin and in bird-skin jackets, decorated with strips of reindeer and edged with black dog-skin.

They crowded about Dorothy Ann as she landed, jumping up and down in delight and pointing out to one another each newly discovered wonder of her costume. If it gave them such pleasure just to examine her, you can imagine their glee when she undid her bundle and showed them by signs that the dresses were for them. In no time at all both boys and girls were

togging themselves out in the American clothes. They put them on top of their own costume. She hadn't brought any boys' suits and she couldn't make them understand her anyway, so she let them think that everyone in America wore dresses.

Just at the height of the frolic some one gave an alarm, and in a twinkling the little Esquimaux fled in all directions. Dorothy Ann looked up and saw coming over the horizon a band of white polar bears. She wasn't afraid because she had her Bear with her, but she noticed the Esquimaux were frightened of even him. The new-comers soon made friends with her Bear, while they looked at her curiously, rolling their heads from side to side on their long necks. But she nestled close to her protector and they did not touch her. After he had said how-d'ye-do all around, they decided it was time to start home. So they boarded their iceberg and sailed off.

"How white they are!" said Dorothy Ann, looking at the bears on the shore.

"Yes," said the Bear. "I used to be as white as that. But a city is not so clean a place as Greenland. I should be unfit to be seen if it were not for my monthly bath in gasoline, followed by a dry shampoo of corn-starch."



"And what funny little tails they have for such big animals!"



“She showed them by signs that the dresses were for them.”



“It is a sad fact,” said the Bear sorrowfully, “but you simply can not keep a tail in the city. I have had three of the cutest ones you ever saw, which I loved to wag at the children, but naughty boys have pulled them all off. I suppose I must be resigned to going through the rest of my life tailless, with nothing to wave to the children.”

“We all know you would wave your tail if you had one,” said Dorothy Ann to comfort him. She succeeded so well that they had a happy time all the way home.

The last thing she thought of as she went to sleep was the cute little white tail the Bear had lost.





SO many wonderful things happened to Dorothy Ann on the night when she took her first trip with the Swan, that there wasn't room to tell them all in that story. One of the most important occurred as she was passing over the lake on her way home when she looked down, and saw a boy fishing in the lily pond. She recognized him right away, for she had often seen him during the day time in the big open place before the railway station, known as Washington Square. There he stands on a watering trough all day, a slender figure amid the great wagons and trucks which keep rolling by him on every side. In his hand he holds a fishing rod, as if he were baiting his hook. Dorothy Ann always waves to him when she passes through the square in a trolley car.

But on the night when she flew over the lake on the Swan's back he answered her wave for the first time. She was delighted, for he had never seemed to notice

her before, and she asked the Swan to fly down so that she could get better acquainted with him.

“We haven’t time to-night,” said the Swan; “but some other time I’ll bring you down on purpose to meet him.”

“Does he go fishing every night?” she asked.

“Of course. That is why he spends every day getting ready.”



All this happened on the first night when Dorothy Ann went to ride with the Swan. So when she was awakened about half past eleven a week later by a noise at the window, she was not at all surprised to see his beak pecking at the screen.

“Want to go see the Fisher Boy?” he asked.

It was not many minutes before Dorothy Ann was cuddling into the white feathery hollow between the Swan’s wings, just as she had done on that first ride. Since then she had ridden with him often during the daytime at Elm Park, so they now felt quite like old friends.

As they flew down over the hill the Swan gradually descended and when they came to the edge of the lake, he glided off upon the water so smoothly that he did not make even a splash. Up the lake he swam and Dorothy Ann thought the motion more pleasant, though

not so exciting, as flying. Pretty soon they came to the little bridge under which she had once gone in a canoe with her father. Under it the Swan went and then under the second and still smaller bridge, into the lily pond. On a rock in the center stood the Fisher Boy, his line in hand as if on the point of beginning to fish.

"Ah, ha! Cloud Bird, so you brought Dorothy Ann with you to-night to see the fun," he said, as they silently glided toward him.

"Will it really be fun?" asked Dorothy Ann doubtfully. "I am not very fond of fishing. The fish are so cold and clammy and they wriggle so when you take them off the hook."


"Not the kind I catch," said the boy laughing. "Wait and see."

Dorothy Ann looked around her. Everywhere were lily pads and the closed lilies.

"I wish some of the lilies were open, just one or two so I could see how they look at night," she said wistfully.



"The fairies are inside asleep," said the Boy. "They will come out at midnight. See, they are opening the shutters now."

As he spoke a distant clock struck twelve. All around her Dorothy Ann saw the blossoms opening, at first slowly, then quickly, as if the fairies were pushing out the shutters of their houses from the inside. From each white petal sprang a tiny fairy until the whole pond was sparkling with the glitter of their wings. They varied in height from the length of Dorothy Ann's thumb  to that of her middle finger, but each, down to the very tiniest, was perfectly formed. At first she thought they were white, but as they turned she could see every color in their irridescent wings and gauzy draperies. Then from the center of each blossom rose a fairy far more beautiful than the others, dressed in deep yellow, with shining wings as bright as sunbeams or the centers of pond lilies.

In and out among them the Swan went, Dorothy Ann watching in delight the lovely little creatures. Then a soft breeze came up, blowing gently through the trees and playing a sweet melody among the pond lilies. With the first notes, each white fairy turned toward the golden one in the center, bowing low. Then in a flash all were off, dancing the grand right and left and passing lightly at each step from one petal tip to the next.

"It is the fairy ball," whispered the Swan.

As the little creatures danced in and out, the

reflections in the water became a whirl of delicate colors, like a rainbow running riot. The music grew deeper and stronger, the fairies danced faster and faster, and the air as well as the water was brilliant with color. As Dorothy Ann watched she saw that they were tossing some bright colored things—she could not tell what—from their hands. Down these things fell into the water and swam off.

“See how the Fisher Boy is working now,” said the Swan.

Dorothy Ann looked around and there beside her he stood, catching fish as fast as he could. And such fish they were as she had never dreamed of, pale pink, deep rich blue, gleaming yellow, glowing purple, and sometimes all glorious colors blended into each other. As he caught them he dropped them into a basket beside him which was made of lily pads fastened together, with a lily stem over the top for a handle. Dorothy Ann looked into the basket a trifle timidly.

“Touch them,” said the Boy, “they don’t feel like other fish.”

She put her hands into the basket.



“Why, I can’t feel them at all,” she said; “except that they are as light as air and deliciously cool.”

"That is because they are Fairy Fish," said the Boy.

"What are you going to do with them?" she asked wonderingly.

"I am going to take them back to Washington Square. They are not really fish at all, as you understand the word, for fairy fish are wishes. I take them back for the travelers, who are my especial friends, and whom I watch all day long as they pass in and out of the station on their way to and from the city. For each one I have a fairy wish. The air of Washington Square is full of them, but you can't see them in the day-time. That is why I must go fishing every night and must spend all day in getting ready."

"But how do you know which wishes are for which people?"



"I can tell that by the colors. This deep blue one is for a little boy who is to start for the sea-shore tomorrow. His one great wish is to learn to swim. It takes its color from the ocean. The pink one is for a girl who is going on her first house party. It is just the color of her new evening dress,—rather a sentimental shade, I think. That dull brown fish is for a little girl who is coming to visit her aunt. Her uncle keeps a drug store and her idea of earthly bliss is to have all the chocolate ice cream sodas she wants. I think she will get them, too."

"Oh, what is that pretty rose and gold one?"

"That is for a young man who is going to a summer sketch class. He wants to be a great artist some day. The fish means inspiration and takes its color from the sunset. This bright green one is for a little lame boy who has never been outside of the city in his life. He is to be taken into the country where he can see the trees and grass and flowers for two whole weeks."

"And will the wishes all come true?"

"Of course. Fairy wishes always come true."

Just then Dorothy Ann caught sight of a fish that was different from all the rest. It was much more beautiful and of all the colors of the rainbow.

"Hello, what's that?" said the Boy, spying him at the same time. "He isn't a traveler's wish and I don't see how he ever got in here. I must catch him."

He cast his line, but the fish was not to be caught so easily. Every time the boy thought he had him, the fish would shake himself off the line and escape, frisking away as if in sport.

"Here, you try it," said the Boy, handing the rod to Dorothy Ann; "I can't seem to get him."



So Dorothy Ann took the rod, cast the line into the water, and, sitting right there on the Swan's back,

tried to land the fish. In a minute he bit. Quickly she lifted the rod and tossed him right into her lap. Out of the water he was even more beautiful than in it. The Boy looked at him curiously.

“I never saw a fish like that, and I don’t know quite what to make of him,” he said, taking him up to toss him into the basket. But the fish slipped out of his fingers, back into Dorothy Ann’s lap. Three times the Boy tried to take him, but each time the fish slipped back. Dorothy Ann couldn’t help laughing at the two—the Boy looked so amazed and the fish so mischievous.



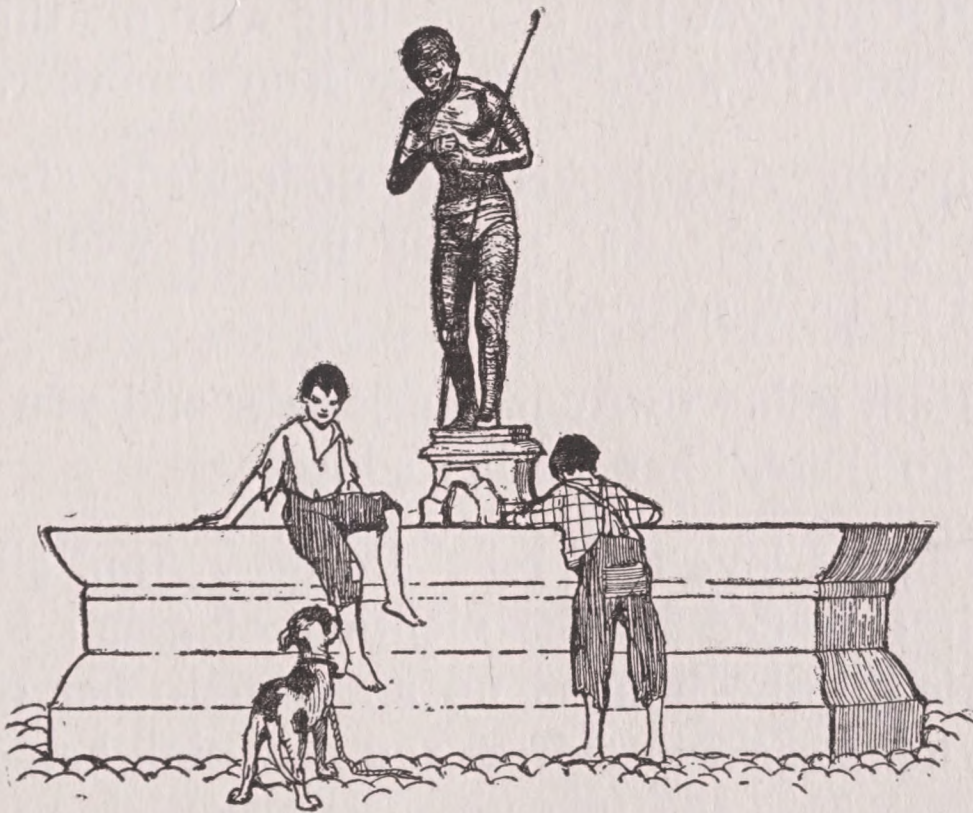
“You’d better stop trying to take him for yourself,” advised the Swan. “You wouldn’t know what to do with him if you succeeded, and I should think you could see that he is intended for Dorothy Ann.”

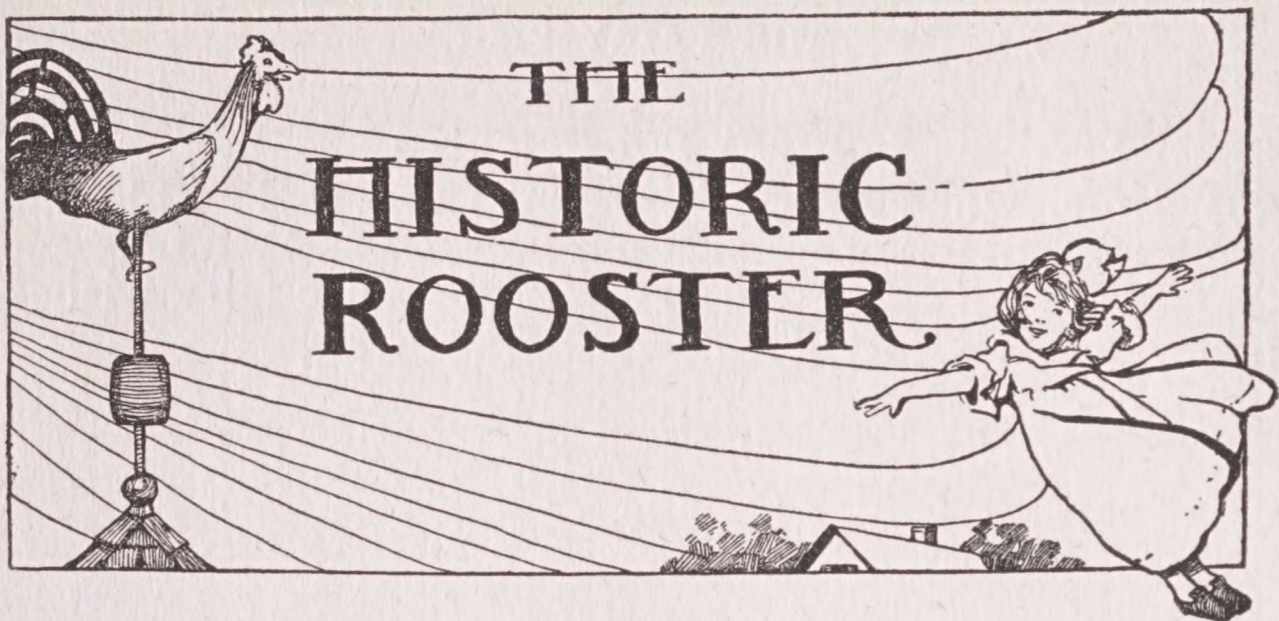
“Of course,” said the Boy, “that is what he is,—a stay-at-home wish for a stay-at-home person. I haven’t seen one for so long I had forgotten what they looked like. It’s a wish that will bring you a good time through the rest of the summer.”

“For me,” cried Dorothy Ann, taking the lovely thing up in her hands. “Can I carry him home with me?”

“Yes, but you may not be able to see him in the day time, when every fairy-like thing is in hiding.”

“But I’ll know he is there, because fairy wishes never can be lost,” said Dorothy Ann.





“**W**OULD you like to go calling with me this afternoon?” asked Dorothy Ann’s mother.

Dorothy Ann looked up undecidedly from her garden where she was pulling up the weeds, which seemed to grow over night.

“I am going to Aunt Marjorie’s, and you always like to go there,” her mother added.

“Oh, I’d love to!” cried Dorothy Ann, all traces of hesitation fled at the mention of going to Aunt Marjorie’s. She jumped up and ran to her room to put on her clean white dress and new pink hair-ribbon.

She didn’t generally care much about making calls, unless it was at Aunt Marjorie’s house. For she knew that while there she could slip out the back door and up the funny little path to the barn on which was the beautiful gold Rooster.

As she went along the path, an hour or so later, she thought the Rooster must have known she was coming, for he suddenly wheeled around and looked at her. She almost thought he winked. Dorothy Ann stood long looking up at him. He was very beautiful and his spreading tail was magnificent.

"I wish he could crow," she said to the man who was feeding the real chickens below.

"Perhaps he would, if you would come out here at daybreak. That is when roosters always do crow," the man answered.

Of course Dorothy Ann knew he must be joking, but she couldn't help thinking of what he said, particularly when she woke up at dawn the next morning, a thing she almost never did. As she was lying in bed wondering whether or not he had been joking, she heard a funny hoarse sound, like a distant crowing.

"It can't be the Rooster," she said to herself. "And yet it sounds as though it might be and it is just dawn. He is such a lovely one I don't know why he shouldn't do a simple thing like that that every common rooster can do, even if he is gold. There isn't any reason why I shouldn't go to see, anyway."

With that, she crept downstairs and out the front door. She was in such a hurry that she ran until she

fairly flew along the street. As she approached the barn she heard a sound like

“Cluck-cluck-cluck, cluck-cluck ca-daa-cut,
Cluck-cluck-cluck, cluck-cluck ca-daa-cut!”

“That is more like a hen than a rooster,” she said to herself. But as she drew nearer, the cluck-cluck sounded like words, although the accent was the same, the voice going way up in the air on the next to the last syllable. By the time she reached the barn she could understand very clearly. The Rooster was clucking:

“Oh, I am the historic *Rooster*,
I’m proud to belong to old *Worcester*,
I make every effort to *boost* her,
But now I can’t crow as I *used* ter.”



He clucked it along so evenly, except when his voice shot way up in the air on “Roost” and “Worces” and “Boost” and “used” that it was no wonder Dorothy Ann thought he was saying “cluck-cluck-cluck, cluck-cluck, ca-daa-cut.” But the minute he spied her, he stopped and let out one glorious crow. She clapped her hands in delight and admiration.

“I used to be able to crow much better,” he said modestly, “but one’s voice loses its best quality in a couple of hundred years.”

"My, I didn't know you were that old," said Dorothy Ann in wonder.

"Yes, I am not so young as I was once. That is what I think when I get tired of life on a farm, which I do sometimes. 'Rooster,' say I to myself, 'you are getting along in years, and the place for an old fellow like you is right here in the quiet of a barnyard. You've passed all your days in the midst of a city rush, and it's high time for you to settle down.' Yes, I'm contented to pass my old age out here amidst the hens and chickens of the farmyard for I have much to look back upon. I was gay enough in my youth and many are the stories I could tell you of the times when Worcester and I were young together."

"Oh, do tell them to me," cried Dorothy Ann, always eager for a story.

"Come up here, then," he said, pointing to a ladder that had been left standing against the side of the barn. She climbed up it and perched on the barrel-like thing underneath the Rooster. She was amazed to find how big he was when she got near him. He was longer than her father was tall, and his tail was the size of her bureau at home, although much thinner, of course. The sweep of his feathers was even more splendid near to than from a distance, and he caught

the rays of the rising sun with a brilliancy that was dazzling.

“I suppose you would like to hear about all the children I have known in my long life,” he began. “You know I always lived until thirty years ago on the steeple of the Old South Church, which used to stand on the common, where the City Hall is now. I can remember many boys and girls, dating Revolutionary War. children wore very generations of little way back before the In those days the plain clothes, and looked quite different from you of today. You have seen pictures of the Puritans so you know what solemn little gray dresses and suits they wore. They were expected to act solemnly, too, and were not supposed to romp. When I looked down from my steeple and saw the procession of them marching into the church below me, I used to think Sunday must have been the worst day of all for them. There was a crack in the roof of the belfry so I could get a peep down sometimes, when the wind was right. There were square family pews in those days and no cushions on the hard wooden seats. The smallest children sat on stools without any backs. And how long do you suppose the sermons lasted?”



“I’ve heard people say that our minister preaches twenty minutes,” answered Dorothy Ann.

“Well, in those days, the minister had hardly got a start at the end of twenty minutes,” said the Rooster. “And their sermons lasted from two to three hours. Just think of that! Even the grownups would sometimes get so tired that they would begin to nod. Then the tithingman would come around with a long pole called the tithing pole, on one end of which was a squirrel’s tail and on the other a hard wooden knob. He would interrupt the nap of the sleeper by tickling his nose with the fur, and when the children whispered he would hit them on the head with the hard knob, which hurt considerably.”

“But there was much happening in those days besides church going. They were exciting times. I saw the Minute Men gather below me to start out in the Revolutionary War. From in front of my church Isaiah Thomas read the Declaration of Independence on the Fourth of July, 1776, and that was the first time it was read in Massachusetts. I saw the soldiers gather in 1861. I saw——”

But Dorothy Ann never learned what else he saw. For the last few minutes he had been twisting and turning so that she lost over half of what he said. Now he was whirling around so fast that she could not understand him at all.



"This has always been the one trouble with my occupation," he said, becoming quieter. "Whenever I would be watching anything especially interesting, the wind would change its direction and turn me tail to it. See, here comes another gust." And with that he was off again, whirling this way and that, which Dorothy Ann thought must be great fun.

"Climb up," he said, at the next lull, as if reading her thoughts. She did not wait to be invited twice, but was settled on his back in front of his beautiful spreading tail by the time a fresh gust came. The wind seemed to know she wanted a ride, and began suddenly to blow in a perfect gale, changing its direction every second. Around and back she whirled, until the merry-go-round was tame in comparison.

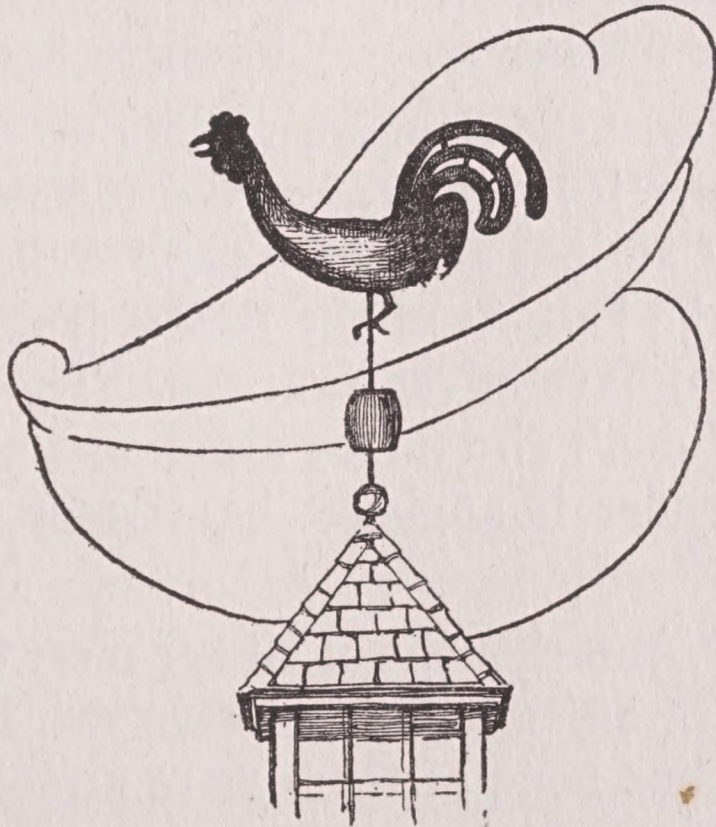
"When you want to go home, let go," said the Rooster. "You have such a start you will blow home now, and the wind is in just the right direction."

When Dorothy Ann had gone around so much that she thought she would have no breath left if she went any further, she let go. And sure enough, the wind carried her, just as the Rooster had said, down the middle of the street and landed her on her front porch. She opened the door and ran quickly upstairs.

There was not a soul stirring yet, and the wind had made her so sleepy she decided to go back to bed

and have another nap before it was time to get up. As she was dozing off she was very glad there was no tithing man to wake her up by tickling her nose with the squirrel's tail. And the wind, rustling through the tree outside her window, seemed to be whispering to her:

“Oh, I am the historic *Rooster*,
I'm proud to belong to old *Worcester*,
I make every effort to *boost* her,
But now I can't crow as I *used* ter.”





ONE time when Dorothy Ann's mother and father went out to spend the evening, Dorothy Ann sat up very late reading about the knights of King Arthur's Round Table. It was long after eight o'clock when she finished her chapter, at the end of which she had promised her mother she would go to bed.

"Oh, dear," she sighed, cuddling up in the corner of her lounge, "it is much more comfortable here than in bed, and I am not one bit sleepy. What wonderful adventures the knights of the Round Table did have! But I seem to have adventures too. The chief difference is that I don't gird on my armor and go in quest of them. I wonder if anybody has armor now-a-days. I do wonder."

Dorothy Ann thought of all her most adventurous friends, the Swan, the Polar Bear, the Rooster, the Fisher Boy, but none of them wore armor.

"I don't believe there is a single armor in town,"

she said aloud; "unless it is on the Turtle at Salem Square. He certainly wears something which looks like one."

The more she thought about him, the more certain she was that he was the one Armored Adventurer in the city and the more she longed to discover how often he started out on his quests and where he went.

"I know what I'll do; I'll go ask him."

You may have noticed that it never takes Dorothy Ann long to do a thing after she has made up her mind, so that in a few minutes she was on her way over the hill toward Main Street. The blocks seemed much shorter at night than in the daytime, and she was surprised to find how quickly she reached the common. As she crossed it towards Salem Square, she saw that there was a struggle taking place on the watering trough between the Boy and the Turtle. The Turtle seemed to be trying to get away and the Boy to prevent his doing so.

"I can't hold him back much longer," said the Boy as soon as he spied Dorothy Ann. "I have held him all day, and the strain has been worse than usual so that my strength is almost gone."

"I always noticed you seemed to be trying to keep him from getting away. Where does he want to go?"

"Oh, he is a great adventurer. See, he is girding up his armor now. He is a Sea Turtle and does not like staying out here in the street. In the daytime when the sun beats down upon him he is quite weak and I can easily hold him, but he gets stronger and bigger as night comes on. He has grown several inches since you came down."



"Why, so he has!" said Dorothy Ann wonderingly. "He will surely get away from you now."

"Oh, no he won't," laughed the Boy mischievously. "When he is big enough I get on his back and go with him. I wouldn't trust him to come back in the morning, if he went alone. There will be room for you, too, if you would like to go along tonight. Here, crawl up on top the armor," he added, holding out his hand to her without waiting for any answer further than her dancing eyes.

In a minute she felt the Turtle move forward. She turned around in terror, thinking she was being carried off alone. But the Boy was taking a running jump and landed on the back of the Turtle just the way the boys who "push off" get on the end of double-runners in the winter when you think they will surely be left behind.

Down the street ran the Turtle, which had now grown quite enormous, all four legs going so fast you

could hardly see them, his head bobbing up and down in front and his tail wagging from side to side in back.

“How did you and the Turtle ever happen to be at Salem Square?” asked Dorothy Ann as soon as she got her breath after the first plunge. “And were you ever a real boy?”

“No, not what you would call real,” he answered, with oh such a wonderful silvery laugh, which seemed to be made up of the singing of birds, the rustling of the wind through the trees of a forest, the rippling of a brook, and the thousand and one murmurings of the woods, all blended together. “I am a faun.”

Dorothy Ann looked around, not understanding him, at which that wonderful laugh again filled the air.

“Don’t you know what a faun is? How ignorant you worldly children are! You see, a faun is not a child of the world of men; he is a child of the woods. I lived all my life until I came to Worcester among the trees of the forests. My friends were the animals and the birds. See how they recognize me for one of them.”

As he said this he began to call with sounds as strange and musical as was his laugh. They were now going through a country road and, as he called, the birds woke from their



sleep and flew in great flocks to the edge of the woods, answering him with a chorus of song. The bunnies popped out of their burrows, the squirrels came scampering over the stone walls, even the blind moles crawled up from their dark underground houses. Dorothy Ann glanced back at the Boy. His eyes were sparkling as if reflecting the light of the fireflies, his body swayed back and forth in answer to the calls of his friends like the graceful tops of poplars in a breeze, and his whole being seemed to laugh with the joy of outdoors.

"You are like Peter Pan," whispered Dorothy Ann, softly, as if afraid her voice would be a strange sound in this new world she was in.

"Yes, except that he was a human baby at first and I never was. See, this wreath in my hair is as fresh and green as if it were still in the forest where it grew. Yet it has kept alive, even in the midst of the city, for months."


They were now getting near the seashore. Dorothy Ann took in great deep breaths of the salt air.

"You haven't told me yet how you and the Turtle happened to go to Worcester," she said.

"Several years ago," he answered, "a lady died and left some money to have a drinking trough made for the horses. The sculptor chosen to plan it knew



“You are like Peter Pan,” whispered Dorothy Ann softly.

he must please the horses, so he came out into the woods where I was living and where he could get in touch with animals and learn their tastes better than in the city. It was there that I met him, and we straightway became good friends. I promised to find him an animal for his fountain. Well, we looked everywhere, but none of them wanted to leave the country until at last we came across this Turtle, whose love of adventure made him jump at the  chance of living in the city. Then, too, his armor gives him greater protection against the disasters that might befall an animal in the unnatural rush of Salem Square."

"But how did you happen to come with him?"

"Oh, the sculptor found that the novelty was going to wear off soon, and so it did. The Turtle enjoys being in the city for a little while each day, but then the wanderlust comes and he wants to go on to explore new places. So the only thing was for me to come too, to hold him."

"But didn't you hate to leave the woods?"

"In a way," said the Boy. "But I felt so sorry for the thirsty horses that I was glad to do it. Then, too, I like to watch the human little boys, who come constantly to play with me and my Turtle. And every night on my trips with him I can see my old friends and

have adventures. So I really don't think I should like to go back to the woods now."

Just then Dorothy Ann looked up and saw they were almost at the ocean. Ahead of them was a high rock cliff, up which the Turtle moved faster when he saw the cool water so near.

"Oh, dear!" cried Dorothy Ann, in distress and alarm. "He will jump in and we'll all be drowned. Stop, Mr. Turtle, please, please stop, and let me off."

"Don't be afraid," said the Boy reassuringly. "We'll come up all right and it's lots of fun. It's just like a shoot-the-chutes, only better."

Nevertheless, Dorothy Ann caught her breath as the Turtle leaped off the cliff and went flying through the air. They struck the water with a splash and sank way down into the green regions below. After a few seconds they came up again and the Turtle, with Dorothy Ann and the Boy still clinging to his armor, went swimming back to the shore.



"There, wasn't that fun!" cried the Boy, his wonderful laugh echoing from one rock cliff to the next.

"I guess so," said Dorothy Ann doubtfully. "I think if I tried it again I should enjoy it more, because I shouldn't be scared next time."

What Dorothy Ann said was exactly true. Over and over again they climbed the rocks and jumped off.



Each time it was more fun to go whizzing through the air than it had been the time before. Any "shoot-the-chutes" ever made was tame in comparison to it. After the first shock Dorothy Ann liked to strike the clear, cold water. Sometimes they landed on the top of a wave, which broke about them into foam. While the foam floated off in all directions like a fleet of fairy boats, the turtle and his two passengers sank into the dark water below.

As Dorothy Ann's eyes became accustomed to the queer heavy look underneath, she could discover more and more strange fish swimming about her. It was like a new world of never-ending wonders, peopled with star-fish, sea urchins, fairy-like shells and swimming things of marvelous lights and colors. She would have liked to linger a few minutes to explore this new realm, if she had not been in such a hurry to climb the rock again and have the fun of going splash into the water. She was sorry indeed when the Boy said it was time to go back to Salem Square.

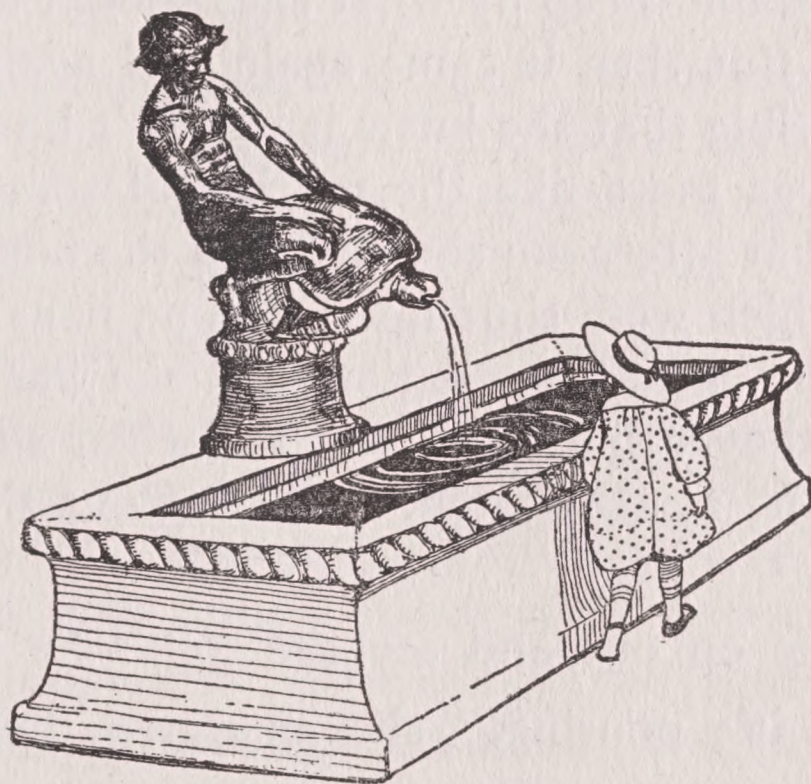
Hardly had she sat down on the lounge in her own room to think over her adventures when she heard the front door open and voices in the hall.

"Oh, mother, mother," she cried, running to the head of the stairs. "Come up quick, I want to tell you all about—"

“Why, Dorothy Ann,” interrupted her mother, reprovingly, “aren’t you in bed yet?”

“Oh, no; I’ve had such a splendid time with the Turtle, and the Boy who takes care of him—”

And before she went to bed Dorothy Ann had to tell her mother all about her wonderful adventure.





ONE stormy night Dorothy Ann was awakened out of a sound sleep by what she thought at first was thunder. But then it came again and again, so loud and so terrible that she knew it couldn't be just thunder. It was more like the roaring of some frightful beast. That afternoon she had seen the boxes at East Park in which were shut up the stone lions that used to be at the old Union Station, and she was just wondering if they could have escaped when she heard a peck-pecking at the screen. Looking out she saw her old friend, the Swan."

"Come on out and see the fun," he said.

"But it's pouring," she answered, hesitating.

"Oh, of course, if you are afraid of the rain—" the Swan began, but before he could finish his sentence Dorothy Ann appeared at the window, wearing her yellow oilskin coat over her nightgown and her sou'-wester pulled way down over her face and ears.

"Why, your back isn't a bit wet," she cried in surprise as she stepped out on it with her little bare feet. "I supposed I'd have to sit in a puddle."

"Of course not. Water slips off me just like off a duck's back," and he held his head high on his long neck as if he had said something very original indeed.



Just then came the terrible noise again, and Dorothy Ann snuggled timidly into the hollow between his wings.

"Don't be afraid," he said. "It is only the Lions at East Park. You know they have been boxed up for several years and they have stood it about as long as they will."

"What can they do?"

"Break open their boxes and get out. They have broken them open four times already. Then the Park Commissioners have to send some one to mend the boxes, and that annoys them, which is just what the Lions want to do. They think the Commissioners need reminding once in a while that they are still here and are getting mighty impatient at their long confinement. There they are just below us. See how that board is being forced up. Ah, he has it now! He is putting his big paw through and breaking open the box."

THE CLOUD BIRD

Sure enough, just then the whole top was pushed up and, with a mighty roar, the Lion sprang out. The Swan hovered above it, so that Dorothy Ann had a splendid seat from which to watch the whole performance. It had been a long time since she had seen the



Lions at the old station and she was so little then she had forgotten what they looked like. The one below her



was quite different from any she had ever seen in a circus or on the merry-go-round or even in the picture books. To begin with it had wings from its shoulders and flew all about, its long body trailing after. Then it had no mane.

"It had a beautiful one, once, they tell me," said the Swan. "But it was so proud of being admired by all the strangers who passed it on the way into the station, that it used to spend the long hours between trains at night combing its mane with its claws, until it combed it all away."

"Oh, what a roar!" cried Dorothy Ann, "that is coming from the other box. They seem very wild for animals that have lived in captivity for so long."

"They are not wild; they're just noisy. You see all the time they were at the station, the Boston & Albany trains went roaring by them, and they were storing up noise for future use. It's Growler you hear inside the box; he makes more noise than Prowler, but

he is always the last to get out. It won't take him much longer now."

Dorothy Ann watched the box eagerly. She could see the top give as Growler pushed upon it from below. Then suddenly, with a mighty crash the boards split, chips and splinters flying in all directions, and Growler, roaring fiercely, leaped into the air. For a few minutes he flew about, his wings moving jerkily like a rusty toy, as if he were stiff from long confinement. But soon they limbered up and he joined Prowler in his flight around the park. The Swan, with Dorothy Ann, on his back, followed them. After making the circle two or three times they flew down to earth right at the entrance of the park. There they sat, one on each side, with their paws placed together like a tabby-kitten's, and their wings at rest against their sides. Dorothy Ann waited to see what would happen next, but nothing at all happened. She looked at the Lions. To judge by the benign smiles on their faces, they were perfectly happy and contented.

"What are they doing?" she finally asked the Swan, a bit impatiently.

"They are rehearsing."

"Rehearsing? For what?"

"Why, for what they are to do for the rest of their lives,—guarding the entrance to this park. The only

trouble is that the Park Commissioners can't decide just where and how to place them."

"Will they rehearse all night?"

"I don't believe so. After all, it is only rehearsing, and they will soon grow indignant when they think how much better time they could have guarding the entrance in the day, when many passersby would admire them (I told you they were vain), and the children would stop to play with them. See, Growler is beginning to growl again and Prowler is getting restless."



In a minute more the tree that the Swan was resting on began to shake and tremble with the terrific roars of the Lions. Dorothy Ann was a little bit frightened and clung very fast to the Swan's neck.

Suddenly Growler and Prowler leaped into the air and then started down the street, now running like real lions, now flying like sea-lions, but always roaring like all lions.

"Let's follow them," said the Swan, suiting the action to the word. "They must have formed some scheme."

Up one street and down another they went, roaring all the way, until they reached the house of one of the Park Commissioners, as the Swan told Dorothy

Ann. To the second-story bedroom window they flew, and there they stopped, Prowler on the right and Growler on the left. Dorothy Ann had thought their roars were loud before, but they were as the gentle purring of a cat compared to what she now heard. The very house shook and the pillars which held up the front porch swayed backward and forward. Deafened by the noise, Dorothy Ann stopped up both ears with her fingers. The Swan flew over their heads and she peeked through the window just in time to see the head of the Park Commissioner vanish under the bed-clothes.



When Prowler and Growler had decided they had made him miserable enough for one night, they went on to the next. They visited each Commissioner in turn, the Swan and Dorothy Ann always following close behind. Sometimes they stole quietly up to the side of the window. Then Growler would wave his paw three times, saying under his breath: "One, two, three, GO!" And with "Go!" he would bring down both paws together and Dorothy Ann would stop up her ears tight, for she knew what was coming.

But it was worse still when there were windows on both sides of the room. Then one Lion would get outside of each. Prowler would start roaring, but just as he was losing his breath, Growler would take it up. In this way they could keep a steady roar pouring and

pounding through the room without ever having to stop for breath, while the poor Park Commissioner would be battered from one side of the room to the other in his efforts to escape the racket.

Dorothy Ann felt quite sorry for the Park Commissioners before the night was over. "If they only knew how the Lions felt about being shut up in boxes, I know they would let them out in East Park," she said over and over to the Swan. "They are really very kind men, you know, for it was they who brought you to Elm Park to take the little boys and girls to ride."

But the Lions did not know how to explain.

The next morning at the breakfast table the Park Commissioners and their neighbors talked about the terrible thunder storm that had frightened them during the night. But Dorothy Ann knew better.





SOMETIMES when Dorothy Ann is so sleepy that she is afraid she can not stay awake long enough to take off her clothes and crawl into bed, the very minute her head strikes the pillow she is as wide awake as if it were ten o'clock in the morning.

“Funny,” she said one night when this happened, “I was so very sleepy a minute ago, and now that I am in bed I’m wider awake every second. I feel more like having some fun than going to sleep. I haven’t had a real adventure since I heard Growler and Prowler roar at the Park Commissioners. I think I’ll go out and see if I can find someone else who is wide awake tonight.”

Dorothy Ann thought of all her friends who would not be asleep at that time.

“The Swan will be at Elm Park, if he hasn’t gone flying among the clouds,” she thought. “Even if he

isn't there, it will be fun just to go around the Park and see how it looks at night. I wonder if the fountain will be playing. The Blue Heron will be there anyway."

The Blue Heron was an old, old friend of Dorothy Ann's. From the time she was a little baby she had always loved to be taken to Elm Park so she could see him, standing alone on his island, with his long neck stretched upward open as if he expected to catch something. But this summer, since the swan boat had arrived, she had forgotten all about the Heron. She was not even quite sure that he was still at the park.



"I'll go find out," she said. "Of course he is a nice bird, though he can't compare with the Swan."

On reaching the park she was greeted with a sound that was like the chirping of birds. As she went on toward the Heron's island it grew louder and louder, so that she was not surprised to find him surrounded by a great flock of little birds, of many kinds and colors. They all sang at once, but their songs, though different, harmonized into the most beautiful music Dorothy Ann had ever heard. It was like the sound of the fairy orchestra which she imagined must play at the ball of the fairy queen.

Suddenly the Heron spied Dorothy Ann.

“Go ask Dorothy Ann for some news,” sang the Heron, and all the little Birds answered; “We’ll do it! We’ll do it!”

With that they spread their wings and flew in a mass over to her. They whirled about her, this way and that, until for a moment she was so dazzled by the changing colors that she could hardly tell one from another. Then they became quieter. One perched on her shoulder, and another, following his example, rested on her hand. She spread out both arms invitingly and in a minute they were covered with the Birds. Seeing the welcome given their fellows, others settled on her shoulders, a row perched on top of her patent leather belt, some clung to the trimming of her dress, and the very little ones nestled in the hollow of her hand. Glancing down she caught her reflection in the water. She looked indeed as though she were clothed in a fairy dress, made of feathers of scarlet, green, yellow, blue, and all the rich colors in which the birds deck themselves.

“Give us some news, some news,” they cried. “Oh, Dorothy Ann, can’t you give us some news?”

“Why do they want news?” asked Dorothy Ann of the Heron, who had flown over from his island, and was standing by, watching the Birds.



"Because they are news agents," he answered. "Didn't you ever hear people say, when asked where they had heard certain news: 'Oh, a little bird told me.'"

"Yes, but I didn't

"Of course they porters for the daily Editor."



know they meant it."

do. These are the re-paper. I am the City

"Oh!" said Dorothy Ann, much impressed. She had never heard of a city editor before, but she knew from the way the Heron held up his head that it must be something pretty fine.

"They are bringing in their news now, and it is my duty to edit it, and get it into shape to be whispered into the ears of our subscribers in the morning. Our paper is called 'The Morning Whisperer.'"

"But where do you get the news?"

"The Birds go pecking around the city and collect a good deal. They interview all kinds of people. Oh, no, of course the people don't know it, but that always makes for the best interviews anyway. Then I get wind of a great many things myself. You see, the Wind and I are old friends, and I catch many items from him as he sweeps over the pond."

"So that is what you are catching. I always

knew from the way you held your mouth open that you were catching something."

By this time the Birds were singing so loud that Dorothy Ann had to pay attention to them. "Give us some news, some news! Oh, Dorothy Ann, can't you give us some news?"

Dorothy Ann gave them all the news she could think of, which wasn't much—but the Heron told her not to feel badly about it, because in the middle of the summer news is pretty scarce, anyway. Then the reporters all spread their wings and flew off singing in chorus: "Thank you, oh, thank you, Miss Dorothy Ann. If there's anything more, will you please let us know."

As their song was dying away, Dorothy Ann turned and saw the Swan, silently gliding toward her.

"How-de-do, Dorothy Ann," he said. "Don't you want to take a ride around the Pond?"

"I'd love to!" she cried. Then she noticed the angry look on the Heron's face. He was glaring at the Swan, who stretched out his long neck and hissed at the tall bird above him, saying: "Don't you wish you could swim? Then you might be of use in this pond."



"I should hope you could do something to pay slightly for all the care you get,"

announced the Heron. "The luxury in which the younger generation is growing up is ridiculous. A bath once a week in soft soap! Ugh! Such nonsense!"

"But I am sure you can do many things that the Swan can't," put in Dorothy Ann, trying to ward off a quarrel. "If you'd rather, I'll not go with him," she added, looking a trifle wistfully at the Swan's soft back and the glittering water.

"No, go ahead. Don't stay on my account."



And with that the Heron marched off haughtily

"I am afraid I have made him angry," said Dorothy Ann, as she settled herself on the Swan's back.

"Oh, no, he acts that way every time I come around," answered the Swan. "He is jealous because all the children, who used to think he was lovely, pay no attention to him whenever I am here. He is turning green with jealousy, which is a shame because his blue coat is the best part of him."

"Oh, he mustn't turn green," cried Dorothy Ann in distress. "We mustn't let him do that."

"I don't know how we can help it," said the Swan, indifferently.

They had a lovely ride through the meres and everything went well until Dorothy Ann dropped her

new handkerchief with the blue border into the water. With a cry, she leaned over to pick it up, when the Swan, startled at the sound, turned suddenly in the other direction. That made her lose her balance and over she went with a splash into the pond.

She was thoroughly frightened, for the water was above her head. But she came to the top and in a minute had her arms around the Swan's neck.

"My, but that scared me," she said, sputtering. "Now how am I ever going to get on your back again?"

"Why, climb right up," said the Swan.

But that was easier said than done. She tried to get a hold on his wings, but there was nothing to cling to. Time after time she started to climb up on his back, but she would always go slipping off down into the water again. Then the Swan would have to get hold of her with his beak and pull her back to the surface. At last she succeeded in getting one leg over his back.

"Now, lift yourself up," cried the Swan, hunching his wing to help her along.



And Dorothy Ann did lift, but she lifted herself so hard that she went sliding down the other side. She understood now what the Swan had meant that time he had spoken of water sliding so easily off a duck's back.

"What shall I do?" cried Dorothy Ann, trying hard to keep from crying. "I simply can't climb up, and I'm wet and cold and so tired I can't even hold on much longer."

"I don't know. I'll try to tow you ashore."

But the Swan could not swim with Dorothy Ann holding on to his neck, and there was no other part of him on which she could get a grip. He himself was helpless, and he could feel her hold grow weaker as she became more fatigued. They were both on the brink of despair when they heard a voice from the shore.

"Want some help?"

They turned and saw the Heron. Before they could answer, he was wading out toward them. He was so tall that he could go way out beyond Dorothy Ann's head. But even so, the anxious couple were afraid they were beyond his depth, too. When he reached them, however, his head was still above water.

"Step on my back," he said in a commanding tone. Dorothy Ann did so without waiting for a second invitation. She held on to his neck just below his head and only her own head and shoulders were out of water. As they waded ashore, the Birds came flocking from all directions, making Dorothy Ann laugh and forget how tired and cold she was by the funny questions they kept pouring upon her.



When he reached them, his head was still above the water.

"Why have they all come back?" she asked.

"Why, reporters always flock to the scene of a rescue," answered the Swan. "It will be spread everywhere and will be the talk of the town by morning."

And sure enough, they were all reporting. Each had pulled out one of his feathers for a quill pen, and they were all writing as fast as they could on leaves taken from the trees, asking questions and taking notes furiously all the time.

"You will be the hero of the story, Heron," said Dorothy Ann. "Don't you ever dare be jealous of the

Swan again nor let him say you are of no use in the pond. If it were not for you, I should be struggling out there yet. And whatever you do, please don't turn green with jealousy, because I love your beautiful blue coat."

"I shall never be jealous again," said the Heron, "and I should hate to have my coat turn green. It has caught this deep shade of blue through years of contact with the sky above, and the reflection in the pond below."





DOROTHY ANN loved mystery; still she was quite curious to know what was going to happen. She saw it would be of no use to ask questions of the Swan, who would tell her nothing, and decided it would be more sensible to enjoy the present than to wonder about the future. So she gave herself up to the fun she was having.

When all was said and done, there was no place so pleasant to be as on the cool white feathers into which she sank. That afternoon she had been on the merry-go-round. It was Labor Day and her special holiday treat had been a trip to the Lake, where she had had a splendid gallop on a great pacing black steed.

"But after all," she said to herself, "he was not half so nice as the Swan."

Just then she noticed that the merry-go-round was right in front of them and that the Swan, suddenly beginning to descend, was headed straight for it.

"Oh, I know where we are going!" she cried in delight.

Sure enough, the Swan flew in through the window and landed right on the merry-go-round. The change from the forward motion to the rapid whirling confused Dorothy Ann so that she could see only dim shapes flying through the air beside her. She seemed to be no longer on the Swan's back, but found herself suddenly astride her friend of the afternoon, the pacing Black Steed. As the merry-go-round died down, she could make out the dim shapes more distinctly, and they all seemed to be looking at her.



The one directly in front of her was so big that she could see nothing beyond him. She had not noticed such an enormous creature there in the afternoon. It was as big as her friend the Polar Bear. Indeed it looked quite like him. In fact it was so much like him that Dorothy Ann decided it must be his twin brother.



"How-de-do?" he growled in a growl that sounded strangely familiar to her. "Aren't you recognizing your old friends tonight?"

"Why, it is,—it really is you, my own big Polar Bear," cried Dorothy Ann, taking one flying leap into his great furry arms. She was greeted with a laugh

from all the other shapes around her. It was a strange laugh, great and joyous, but a mixture of many sounds which were queer in themselves, yet quite natural to her. Looking about her once more, she understood. The laugh was made up of the roar of lions, the crowing of a rooster, the singing of a great flock of little birds, and above it all the wonderful woodnotes of a faun. For, you see, she was surrounded by all her friends of the summer.

“What is it?” she cried, “a surprise party?”

“Exactly,” said the Heron, who always took it upon himself to give all the information there was to be given. “A surprise and a farewell party?”

“Farewell?” asked Dorothy Ann. “Where are you going?”

“We are not going anywhere,” answered the Swan. “But your little friends are returning from the mountains and the sea-shore, and tomorrow your school begins, so you will no longer need us. We came to you in the summer when you were lonesome.”

“Oh, but I shall hate to be left alone,” began Dorothy Ann.

“Tut, tut,” interrupted the Rooster, “we are down here for some fun and not to waste our time like this. The merry-go-round is starting.”



In a minute the merry-go-round was whirling again at a terrific speed.



“Where are the rest of the horses?” shouted Dorothy Ann, above the noise of the music.

“They are having a night off,” answered the Black Steed. “They worked so hard today that they were given a vacation. But I stayed to see you again.”

By this time the merry-go-round was in full swing. As the music grew louder one after another of the riders began to sing. A strange sound it was, made up of the many different voices. But the tune was so catchy that Dorothy Ann was soon singing as lustily as the best of them, all the time whirling around and around. It took her no time at all to learn the words which were:

“Oh, when we hear the festive music sound,
The music sound,
Like lightning we are off with leap and bound,
With leap and bound;
Make no effort to contain us,
There is naught that will restrain us,
For we’re bound for foreign travels on the merry-go-
round, go-round,
For travels on the whirling merry-go-round!”

As they went, they seemed to fly from one strange land into another until Dorothy Ann was quite con-

fused. In the wink of an eye, they passed from the city to the country, from the mountains to the sea-shore, from coldest Greenland to the sunny South. About them swarmed a mass of people, birds, beasts, and all creatures, flying and running, howling and roaring, doing all strange things and making all strange noises till her brain itself was in a perfect whirl.

"What does it mean?" she asked.

"Why, the merry-go-round carries every one of us off into the lands of our own fancy," explained the Swan. "You are trying to go with all of us at once; that's what makes you so confused."

"We'd better take her one at a time, I should think," said the Boy on the Turtle's back.

"All right, you go first," answered the Swan.

Thereupon the music started up again and everyone jumped off except Dorothy Ann, the Boy, and the Turtle.




In a minute she was whizzing through the green woods and deep mysterious forests, where unaffrighted animals sprang from their hiding places of a minute before and all birds in the trees united in a joyous song. Above the others Dorothy Ann could distinguish the clear, flute-like voice of the Faun-Boy. The words he sang were:

“Waken, oh birds, there is nothing to fear,
Waken, oh bunnies, and foxes, and deer,
To the heart of your world are we whirling tonight,
Of the secret of nature to learn the delight.”

When at last they were going so fast that Dorothy Ann could no longer see anything about her, all the animals seemed to join in the chorus, and again she was singing with them:



“Oh, when we hear the festive music sound,
The music sound.”

At the end of the chorus, the merry-go-round slowed down a trifle and she was astonished to find herself no longer in the green woods. Everywhere about her was just one vast stretch of endless white. They seemed to be breaking their way through icebergs and passing over mountains of snow. Br-r-r! It was cold! As she shivered, she felt herself being
 lifted into a great blanket of warm white fur. Looking up, she found herself in the Bear's arms. In his deep, bass voice he was singing to her:

“Away to the lands of the North let us go,
Whizzing through regions of ice and of snow,
Where the low midnight sun sheds its marvelous light,
On the slow moving icebergs to left and to right!”

Again came the fast whirl and the chorus. Gradually the old familiar friends faded away and dim shapes took their places beside Dorothy Ann. Quaintly dressed little boys and girls stood by her, looking timidly at the great golden Rooster upon which she found herself sitting. Loud crowed the Rooster, its crows turning suddenly into the song:

“Back do we whirl o’er the years that are passed,
Years I have watched as they flew by so fast;
Crowding about us are phantoms and shapes,
Clothed in quaint costumes and Puritan capes.”

Once more came the chorus, which grew louder and louder, wilder and wilder with the rapidly whirling merry-go-round, until Dorothy Ann thought it sounded more like a roar of wild beasts than a song. She was not surprised, therefore, to make out the forms of Growler and Prowler, standing one  on each side of her. Like the noise  of distant thunder came their song:

“Like the engines we watched in the days of old,
As under the arch of the station they rolled,
So prowling and growling we whirl around,
Rumbling and grumbling with frightful sound.”


The next chorus rang clear and musical after the growling of the lions. Sweeter it grew until Dorothy Ann knew that she was surrounded by the flock of

little Bird Reporters. But they seemed to enjoy the rapid motion even more than her former companions. Faster and faster they flew in a perfect frenzy, singing:



“For news let us tear through this turbulent land,
Seeking forever a story off-hand,
To fires and to car-strikes, wrecks, theatres, and fairs,—
So long as it’s news, where we go no one cares.”

Gradually the singing of the birds grew less excited and more like those Dorothy Ann had heard in the woods when she went riding with the Boy and the Turtle. The whir of fire engines and the clashing of trains vanished, and softer, gentler sounds filled the air. The black smoke of the cities dissolved into a thin mist, which took upon itself all colors, and formed an arch like a rainbow above the rapidly moving merry-go-round. Dorothy Ann was dazzled for a minute by the mass of color flashing before her, but as her eyes became used to it she could make out the shapes of tiny dancing creatures.

“Can it be fairyland and those the fairies?” she asked aloud. Turning,  she found the Fisher Boy and knew that it was Fairyland indeed. The fairies, in their flight, touched her bright cheeks and her little bare feet and peered under her eye-lashes to catch their own fair reflections in her gleaming eyes.

Upon her finger tips they dropped their fairy fish of all the beautiful colors that wishes are made of.

“Now I know why I have had such a happy, happy summer!” she cried in delight. “It is because I caught the wonderful Fairy Fish which was a promise of joy to the stay-at-home person.”

But the Fisher Boy answered only by joining in the song the fairies were singing to the soft accompaniment of bell-like music:

“From the haunts of the fairies in woodland dell,
We dance to the music of tinkling bell,
And each flings aloft a fairy fish
Which is caught by you as a fairy wish,
The token of our farewell!”



On and on Dorothy Ann floated amid the wonderful sounds and colors. She put out her hands and felt the soft cool of what she thought must be the fairies' wings.

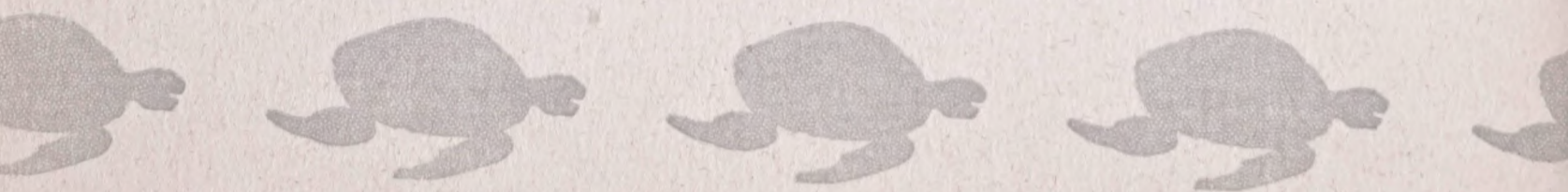


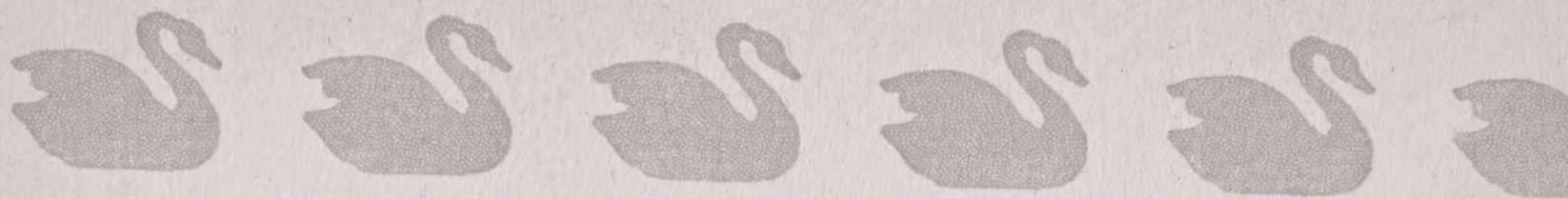
“Why,” she exclaimed, “I didn’t know they were made of real feathers.”

There were so many of them that they seemed to surround her. She could feel them against her cheek, tickling the back of her neck, and under the soles of her little bare feet. She could feel nothing else, she could see nothing else, she was wrapped in them.

Gradually it came over her that she was no longer on the merry-go-round, but was floating through the air,—yet still with the fairies, for she felt sure they would never leave her. On and on, through the clouds and stars into that great mysterious sky of night she sailed, borne aloft by the Cloud Bird.







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